



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

IV Translate

- (1) *In Athens* there are many beautiful buildings which I myself have not seen.
- (2) The enemy wished to attack the Roman people *with their weapons*, but were kept away *from the city* by the inhabitants.
- (3) Who went to Caesar's home and reported the misfortunes of the army *to him*?
- (4) The one lieutenant departed from Rome late at night, the other was compelled to hasten *to Corinth*.

(What is "late at night?" Surely, if *de media nocte* is desired, the English is ambiguous and a bit of special pleading. It absolutely requires the accurate memory of a special phrase, and that a rare one, a *ἀπαξ λεγόμενον* for the 4 books of Caesar).

- (5) The general pitched his camp near the same deep river.

V. Explain the construction of the underlined words.

Here is a Latin examination without a word of Latin in it. But you will say: These boys were being coached for their college examinations, for the trying-out tests of the coach are always more severe than the entrance papers themselves. Well, the pupils to whom this gruelling task was set had been studying Latin five — months! Think you that each of these little victims rose from the seat imbued with love for the Classics? Infant prodigies, we grant you, the successful ones were. But what of those who must fall by the wayside and be lost to culture, they and their children to come, under the terrible intensity of this instruction? Love for the Classics? Minerva, alma mater litterarum, looms large above the victim. Her heavy hand descends: will the victim love the alma mater?

A short time ago the President of one of our most famous colleges for women announced her ambition to establish therein a selected group of the choicest minds, withdrawn from the world, an elect fit company, though few, to constitute an aristocracy of learning. Nothing could be farther from the true aim of education. The devoted few need not be specially trained for their devotion: they will find their sphere by natural selection, by foreordination, or—if you will—by chance. Do not seek to gather the chosen apart, but make learning the common thing, send culture abroad in most attractive garb to win the young to her; a thing of which I am afraid our manner of presenting culture studies falls somewhat short.

CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, Philadelphia. B. W. MITCHELL.

REVIEW

A Roman Wit. Epigrams of Martial rendered into English. By Paul Nixon. Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co. (1911). Pp. xx + 119. \$1.00.

Mr. Nixon tells us in the preface to this version of some epigrams of Martial that the book had its

inception "in an attempt to prove to certain bored freshmen that the Romans were not at all times hopelessly austere and lofty". Whatever the motive in beginning the task, it is easy to see that, once begun, it should prove entertaining and attractive to an author possessing, together with Mr. Nixon's evident liking for the original, his talent for rollicking rhythm and whimsical rhyme. An attractive task—yes, but by no means an easy one. The author must deal with the acknowledged master of the epigram, a master, too, who wrote in a language admirably suited to that form of literary composition. The compact terseness of the Latin tongue, its power of indicating shades of emphasis by word-order, and its tendency to the periodic sentence-form all render it an ideal medium for the epigram, and make readily possible the following of Lessing's prescription that the *point*, the most essential part of the composition, be both concisely and clearly made. The English translator, on the other hand, must struggle with an uninflected language which takes too many words to express its idea, which can shift the position of its words within narrow limits only, and which has a well-nigh irresistible tendency to blurt out its secret before it reaches the end of its speech. The achievement of a good English epigram is difficult enough, at best, but when the author labors under the necessity of reproducing, even with scant adherence to the literal, the matter of a good Latin epigram, and reproducing it in verse at that, the difficulties are doubled.

That Mr. Nixon has attained so large a measure of success in this attempt is due, we may believe, to his own enjoyment of the work. For enjoy it he does, unmistakably, and success he has to a remarkable degree, in view of the difficulties encountered. In fact, some of his versions are so good that others suffer by comparison with them, and one might wish that a little stricter selection had left the volume a bit thinner and the quality a bit more rare.

The preface tells us that the volume is offered "to the general reader, rather than to the classical", but it seems likely that the latter will be as promptly attracted to it and will judge it in as friendly fashion. For, whereas the general reader may not criticise the verses in respect to their falling short of the original, he cannot, on the other hand, realize as does the classical the obstacles which the author has overcome.

That the translation does fall short of the original no one would deny, but that statement in regard to translations is axiomatic, and no one, least of all an appreciator of Martial such as Mr. Nixon, would dream of expecting a rendering of his epigrams to prove the rule by being an exception.

The translator has voluntarily departed from the original in that he has assigned a title to each epigram, some of them merely colorless, such as *To Linus*, *To Postumus*, but many of more signifi-

cance. If this significance were always as apt as that of the title affixed to 6.35, Consuming Time (p. 50), we might welcome the innovation without reserve, but too often the application is so remote as to be justly termed far-fetched, and sometimes it is dull and mechanical. In many instances, on the other hand, the title is almost an epigram in itself, has its own point, its own jest, and I think it is neither captious nor fanciful to suspect that the more striking and successful the independent appeal of the title, the more attention it attracts from the epigram itself, thus weakening the appeal of the latter.

As might be expected, the longer pieces in the volume show the fewest, or at any rate the least conspicuous defects. The greater length of the English over the Latin is less apparent, the author's facility in verse has freer rein here, and the effort at compression, which sometimes makes the shorter ones awkward in rhythm or syntax, or even blind in sense, has little effect. Yet even here the difficulty, inherent in the language, of effectively closing with the sting in the tail is seldom entirely overcome. Frequently, after swinging along for several spirited stanzas, we are sensible of a slump, just where the point should be driven in with a twist.

The briefer epigrams suffer, almost without exception, from the inability of English to say anything, except something bald or venomous, in two lines. In some cases, however, the point is admirably made, as in the following version of 11.93 (p. 14), where, also, the brevity of the original is pretty well preserved:

The house of the bard Theodorus burned down!
What an insult, O Muses, to you!

The gods have done wrong:

For the credit of song

The bard—should have burned with it, too.

Occasionally where the version is considerably expanded, as regards both matter and expression, the expansion justifies itself with fun of its own, as at the end of 6.72 (p. 51), where Martial's

Dum non volt vacua manu redire,
ipsum surripuit Cilix Priapum

becomes

Some booty a tony thief's honor demands:

Cilix glared at the god and said "Drat you!"

And then he reluctantly spat on his hands

And staggered away with his statue.

Sometimes we find an allusion happily modernized, as when the *libertina* of 3.33 appears (p. 28) as the girl "who chooses one's socks, between chews", or in 3.55, where Martial's irresponsible impudence is very well hit off (p. 16):

Though people sniff and say

That Messrs. Roger and Galet

Must have moved to any street you're passing up,
Pray, Tullus, don't assume

That *you're* your rare perfume—

It smells the same when sprinkled on my pup.

A clever ingenuity is also employed in rendering certain plays on words by English parallels. But these must go unquoted for lack of space, as must the longer poems which in some respects show the translator at his best. As for those which show him at his worst, where the point is blunted or weakened or even so completely lost that one must needs use Martial as a 'trot' to find out what the English means, where the long-winded English carries no compensating jest, or where his usual admirable metrical sense so far deserts the author that nothing but an author's reading could make the verses rhythmical—all these belong to that minority, before alluded to, which we might wish weeded out of the collection. Since the author has not performed this task, however, each reader may do it for himself and still have left a piece of pleasant work, worth doing and well done.

That the book will fulfill successfully its avowed purpose of appealing to the general reader I have never doubted since I tried it on an acquaintance innocent of Latin, but with a nice taste in English epigram.

BARNARD COLLEGE.

GRACE HARRIET GOODALE.

The Greek Club of Essex County commenced its seventh season at the New England Rooms in Orange, New Jersey, with an attendance of seven, and read three hundred lines of the Prometheus of Aeschylus. The Club will meet on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, as usual, and will read, after finishing the Prometheus, the Oresteia.

Anyone desiring to join may communicate with the Secretary, the Rev. Doctor James F. Riggs, Halsted Street, East Orange, N. J.

CORRESPONDENCE.

A recent reviewer of a college Greek text-book in these columns (4.165) set it down as a "fault" of the book in hand, as of the others in the series to which it belonged, that it had the notes at the bottom of the page. It would be dangerous to assume that any sentiment voiced in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY will fall unnoticed or fail of influence. Hence the present writer gives notice that there are those who believe in this method of text-book construction. Either notes are a good thing for the student, something he should be encouraged to use, or they are not. If they are a good thing, why should we compel the student, in his efforts to use them, to run the risk of physical and mental strabismus? The writer confesses to a good deal of sympathy with Mr. Dooley's philosophy of education: "It doesn't really matter so much what ye teach a boy so long as ye make it unpleasant for him". But he is not quite prepared to include among the de-dederated forms of unpleasantness mere inconveniences of tools or tediousness of procedure.

I have in mind three classes of students, on whose members notes detached from the text produce different effects.

(1) The faithful, thorough-going student who wants to know all about a passage, the 'balanizer', as it were, in language study, will probably make use of